(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Discotinuation of STD/ISD Services in Jammu and Kashmir

†*117. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Dr. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether STD/ISD services have been banned in Jammu and Kashmir as a result of which the Army Jawans and other security forces posted at the border are not able to talk to their families on phone;

(b) whether due to closure of telephone booths unemployment has also increased.

(c) if so, whether Government would reinstate STD/ISD services in the State; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, MINISETR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) The STD and ISD services were withdrawn on security considerations from all private public call offices in 8 districts of Jammu & Kashmir State, namely, Kupwara, Baramulla, Pulwama, Anantnag, Rajouri, Poonch, Kathua and Doda with effect from 28.12.2001 and 4 more district, namely, Badgam, Srinagar, Udhampur and Jammu with effect from 1.1.2002. However, STD/ISD services on PCOs in army cantonment, security forces or camps in J & K state have not been debarred.

(b) Even though the STD/ISD facility has been withdrawn, the local and 95 dialing facility is available to all such franchised PCO operators and they can dial most of the places in the State. The minimum guarantee for these PCOs has accordingly been reduced to be in line with Local PCOs.

(c) and (d): Government is keeping a watch on the situation and shall take a appropriate action in due course of time.

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

.